

State of North Dakota



Foster Care & Adoption

2003 Annual Report

**North Dakota Department of Human Services
Children and Family Services**

Foster Care and Adoption in North Dakota: Descriptive Characteristics of Children in Care

Published by:

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Additional copies of this report may be obtained upon request from the Administrator of Foster Care or Adoption
Children and Family Services Division
North Dakota Department of Human Services
State Capitol, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505.

Note: Information presented in this report is gathered using the CCWIPS information system. Federal AFCARS data, derived from the CCWIPS system, is used to complete the foster care section. Because the AFCARS data is not finalized for six months following the end of the fiscal year, federal fiscal year 2001 was the most current data available at the time this report was created. Percentages in charts may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Foster Care

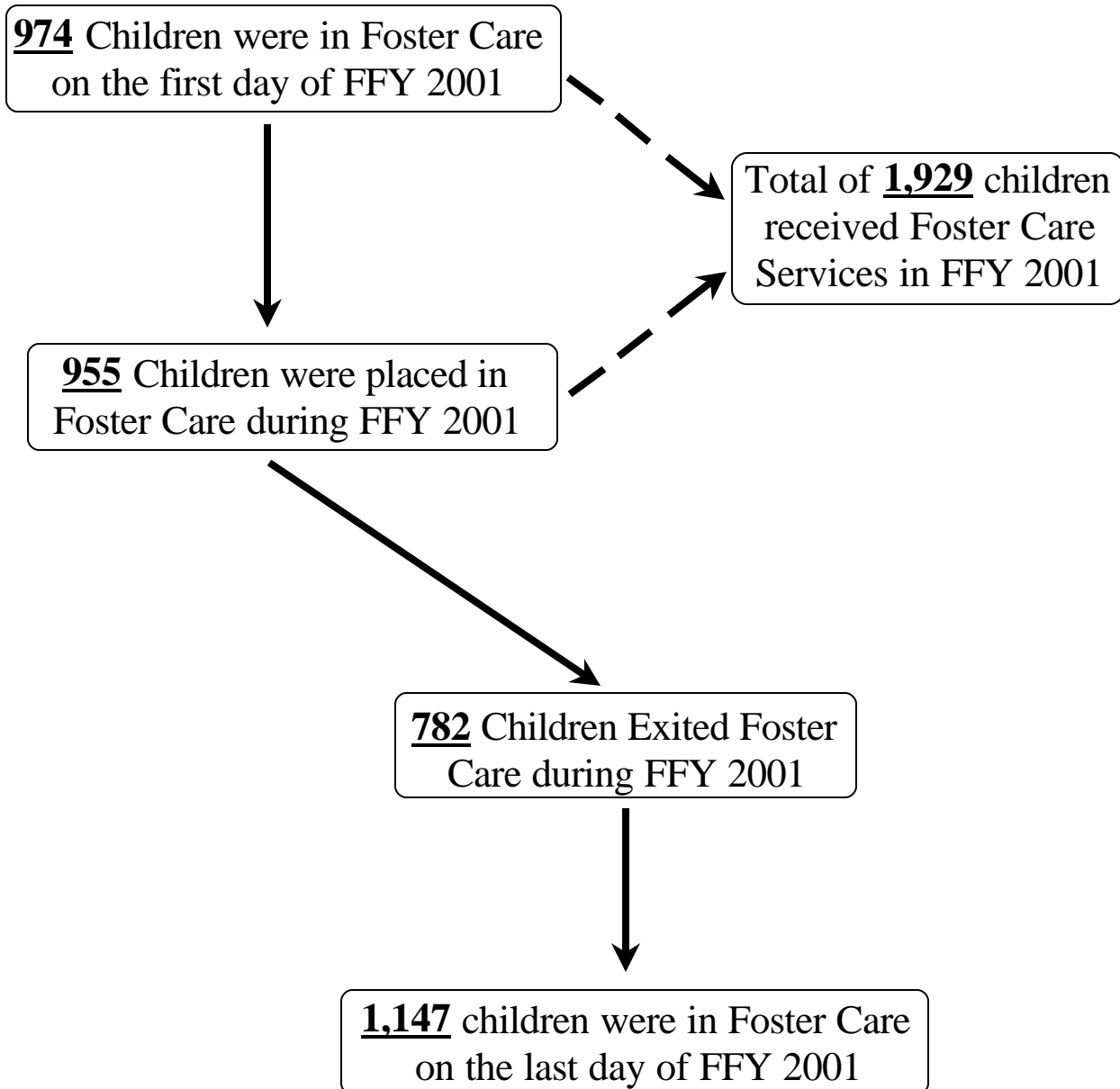
Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2001

October 1,2000 - September 30, 2001

Foster Care

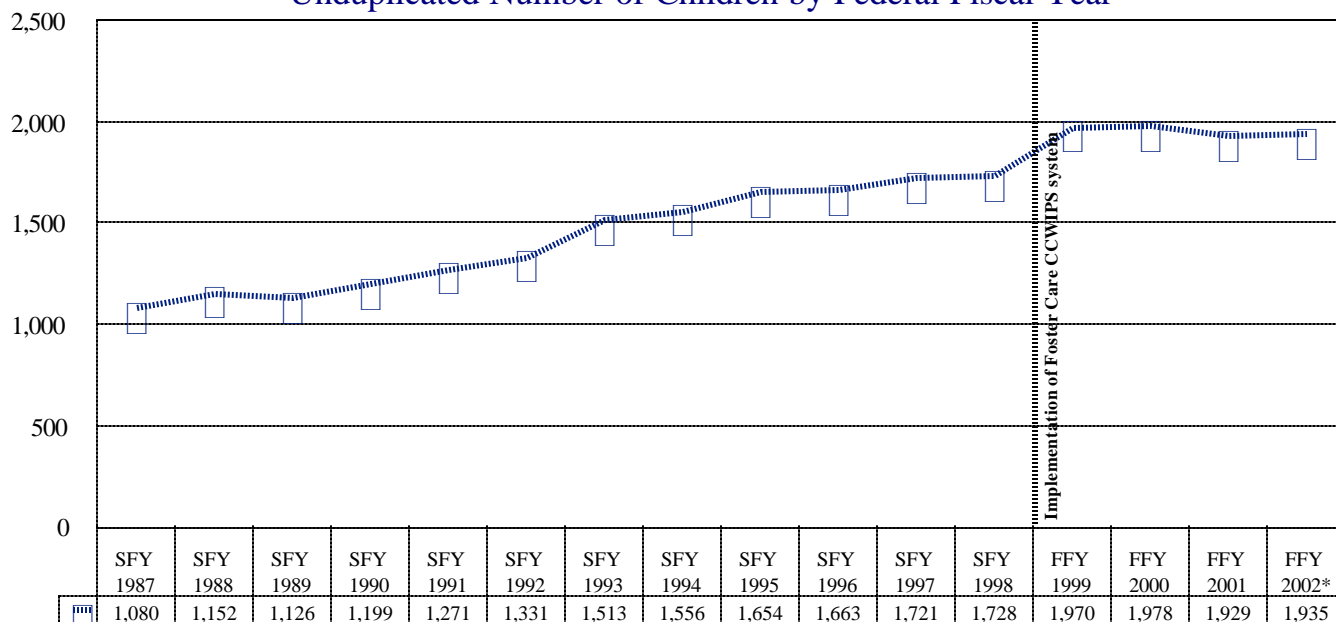
A total of 1,929 children received foster care services in Federal Fiscal Year 2001 (FFY 2001 - October 1 2000 to September 30, 2001). Of the 1,929 children, 974 had open cases on the first day of FFY 2001 and 955 children were placed in foster care in FFY 2001. A total of 782 children exited foster care in FFY 2001, leaving 1,147 children in foster care on the last day of FFY 2001.



Foster Care

Number of Children in Foster Care

Unduplicated Number of Children by Federal Fiscal Year



*Preliminary number reported here for comparison only - the FFY2002 AFCARS file will not be finalized until April 2003.

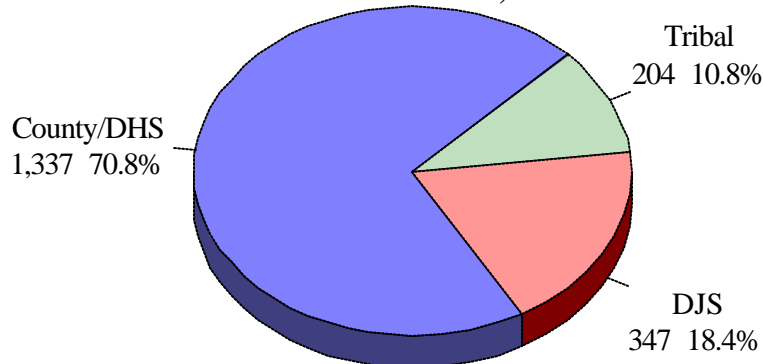
The number of children in foster care has remained stable over the previous six years. The apparent increase in children from 1998 to 1999 reflects the implementation of a new Foster Care computer system (CCWIPS) rather than an actual increase. That is, CCWIPS provides us with data on children not previously captured on the old system.

Custodian

When a child is removed from home, the courts grant custody of the child to a public child welfare agency. We classified children in the state's Foster Care system as either in the custody of the Department of Human Services or the counties (1,337; 70.8%), the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) (347; 18.4%) or Tribes (204; 10.8%). The classification is based on the custodian on the last day of the child's care or the last day of the year if the child is still in care on that day. For purposes of this bulletin, we compare most items by these three categories of custodian.

Foster Care Children by Custodian - FFY 2001

Total Children = 1,929



*Unavailable/Other = 41

*Unavailable/Other excluded in all "break-outs" by custodian.

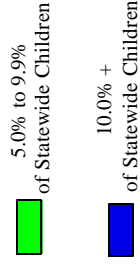
North Dakota Department of Human Services Foster Care

Number of Children in the Custody of the County or DHS Executive Director**

Percentage of Total Statewide Children by County

Total Statewide Number of Children 1,337

FFY 2001



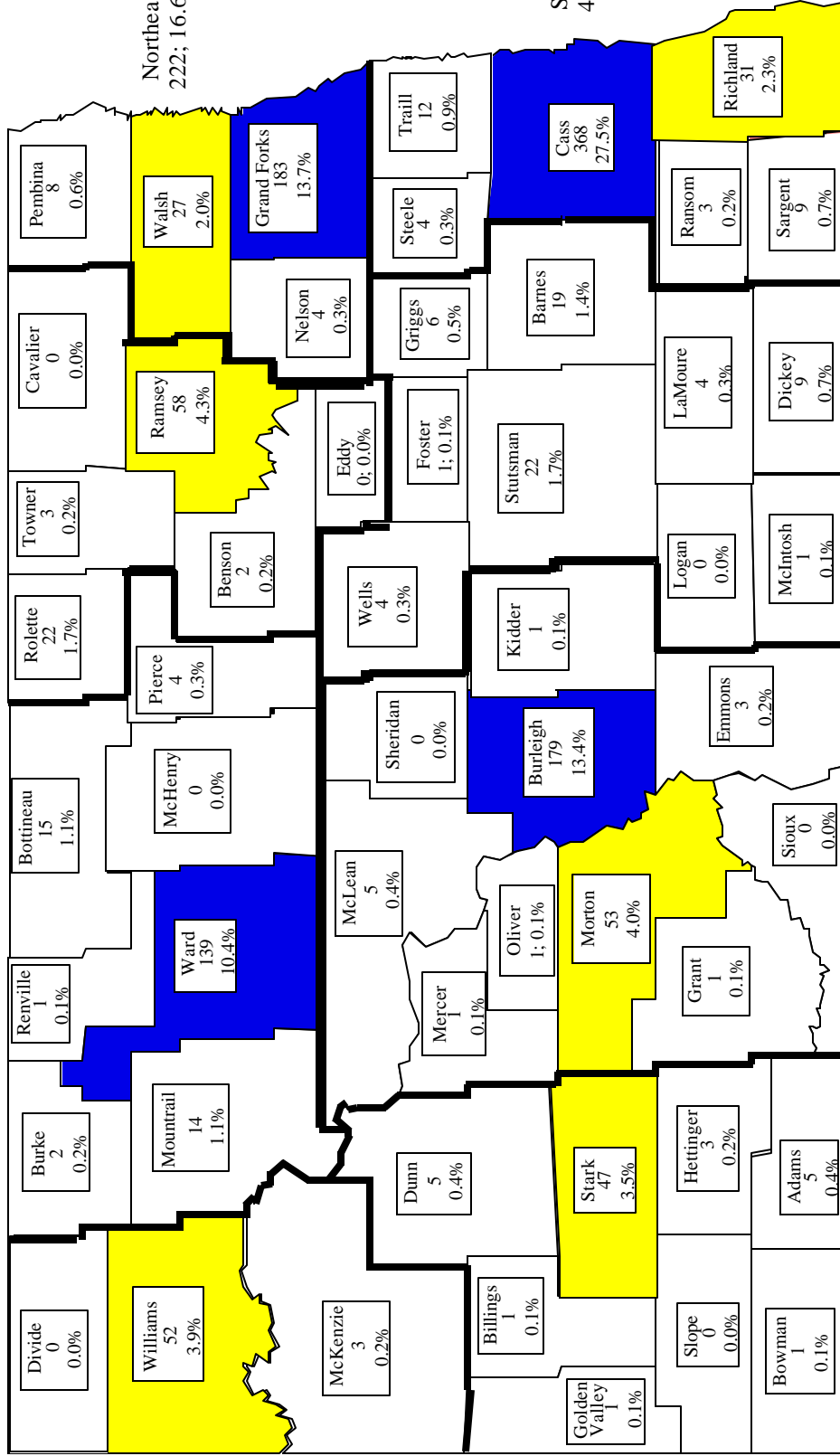
Northwest
55; 4.1%

North Central
175; 13.1%

Lake Region
85; 6.4%

Northeast
222; 16.6%

Southeast
427; 31.9%



Badlands
63; 4.7%

West Central
244; 18.3%

South Central
66; 4.9%

* 189 children in custody of DHS Executive Director. These children are represented under their last known county.
 ** Excludes children in DHS and Tribal custody

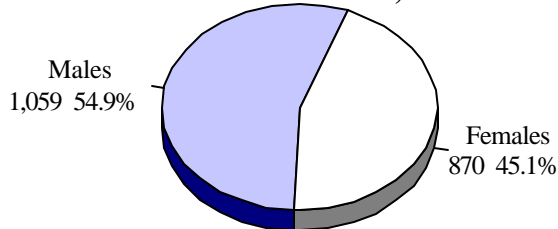
Foster Care

Gender

Gender of the children in foster care in North Dakota during FFY 01.

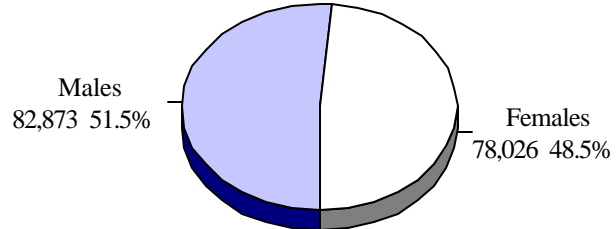
FFY 2001

Total Children = 1,929



Gender of the child population (0-17) in North Dakota in 2000 (actual - Census 2000):

ND Child Population

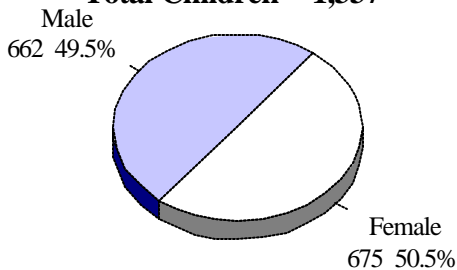


The North Dakota Census 2000 Data shows that the North Dakota child population is nearly equally male and female (51.5% male; 48.5% female). However, the proportion of males in foster care (54.9%) is larger than the proportion of females (45.1%).

Gender of the children in foster care in North Dakota by custodian.

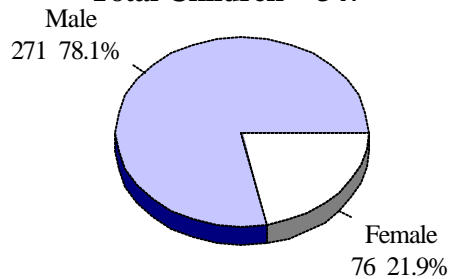
County/DHS

Total Children = 1,337



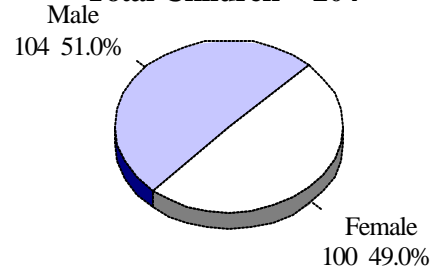
DJS

Total Children = 347

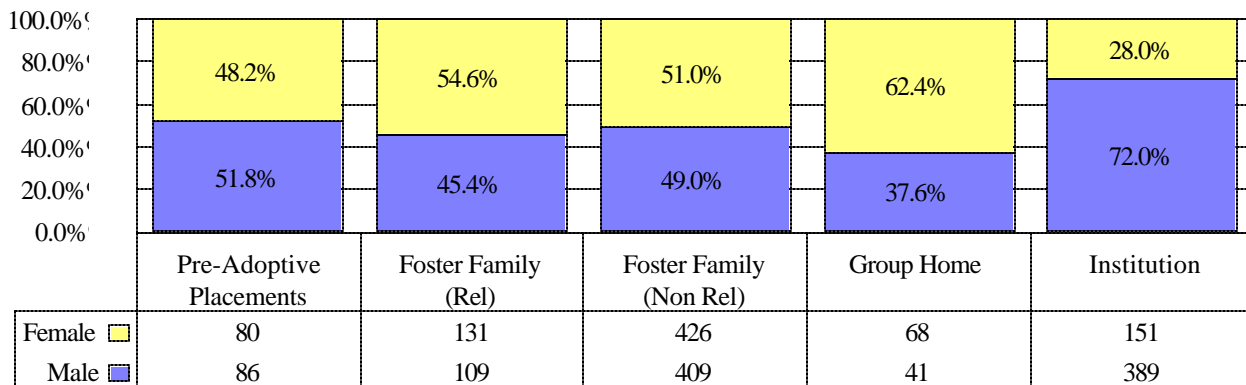


Tribal

Total Children = 204



Gender of the children in foster care in North Dakota by type of care.

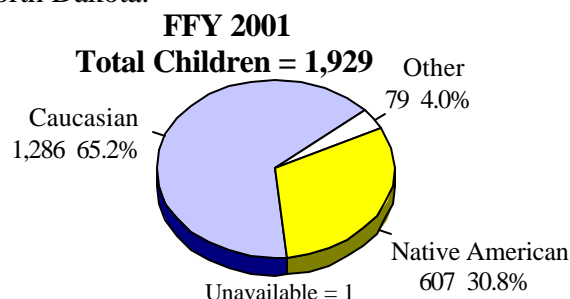


Note: Placement information was unavailable for 39 children; 25 male and 14 female.

Foster Care

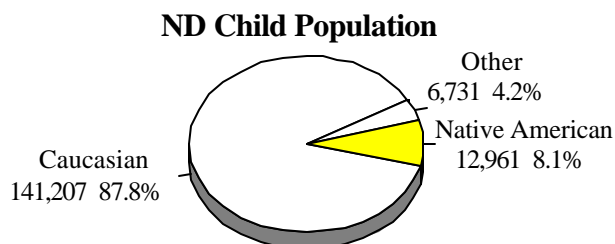
Race

Race of the children in foster care in North Dakota.



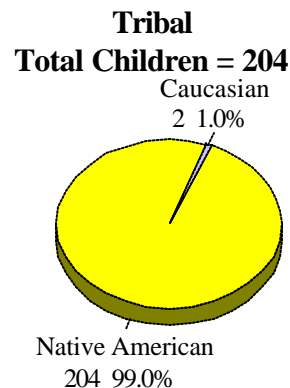
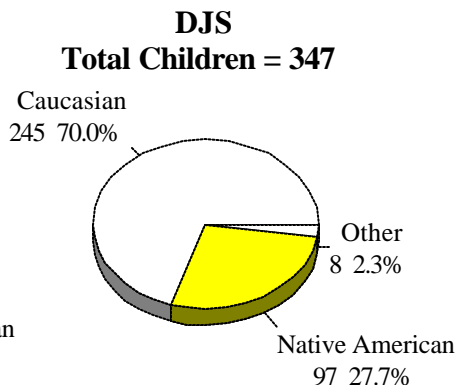
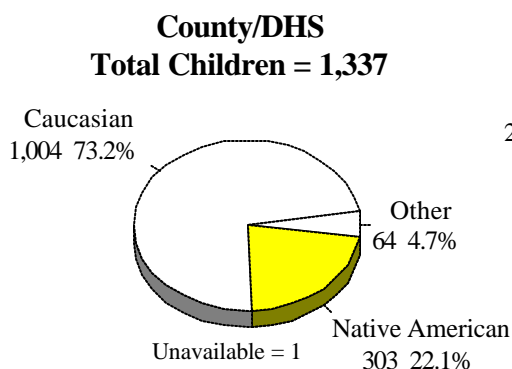
Note: More than one race may be indicated for a child.

Race of the child population (0-17) in North Dakota in 2000 (actual - 2000 Census):



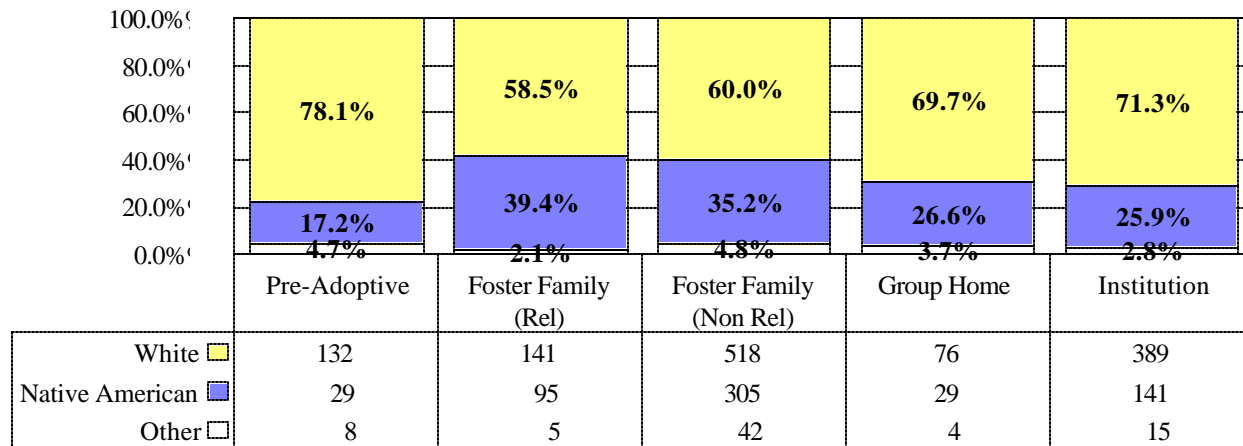
The North Dakota Census Data indicates that 87.8% of the North Dakota child population is Caucasian, 8.1% of the children are Native American, and 4.2% of the children are other races. However, 65.2% of the children in foster care in North Dakota during 2001 were Caucasian while 30.8% were Native American and 4.0% were other races. Thus, comparing the race of children in foster care to the North Dakota child population reveals that non-Caucasian children, especially Native Americans, are over-represented in Foster Care.

Race of the children in foster care in North Dakota by custodian. Notice the over-representation of Native Americans in the Foster Care population, regardless of custodian.



Note: More than one race may be indicated for a child.

Race of the children in foster care in North Dakota by type of placement.



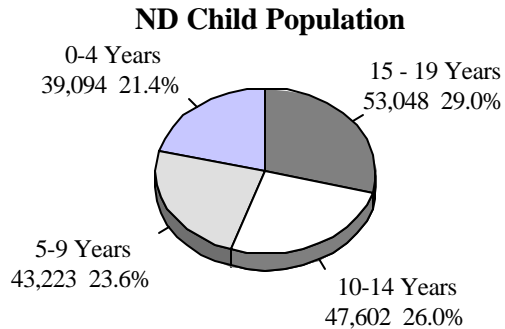
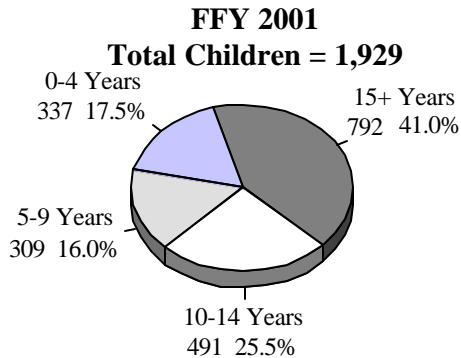
Note: Placement information was unavailable for 39 children: 28 Caucasian, 8 Native American, and 5 Other, race was unavailable for one child.

Foster Care

Age

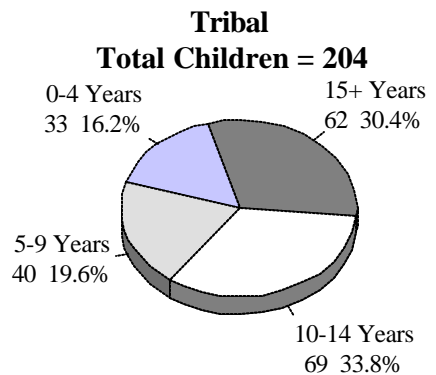
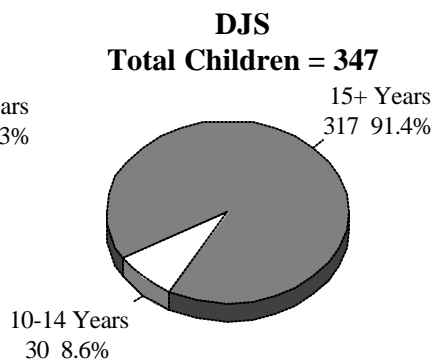
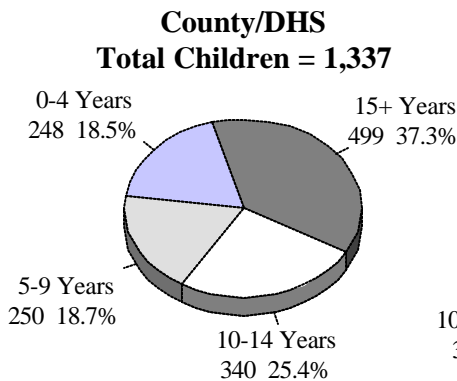
Age of the children in foster care in North Dakota.

Age of the child population (0-19) in North Dakota in 2000 (actual - 2000 Census):

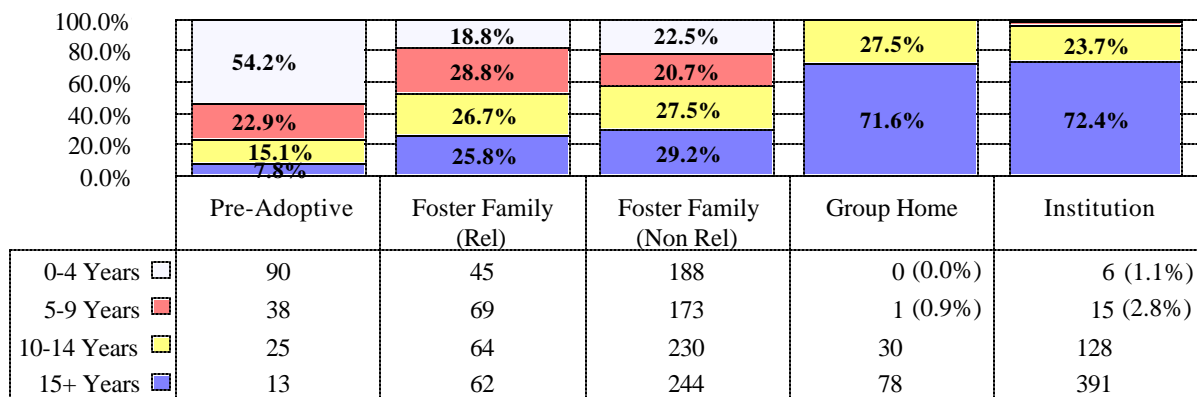


When the age of the children in care is compared to the population data, it appears that older children are over-represented in Foster Care (10-14 = 25.5%; 15+ = 41.0%). Many of the older children are in the custody of DJS and are more likely to be placed in facilities.

Age of the children in foster care in North Dakota by custodian.



Age of the children in foster care in North Dakota by type of placement.



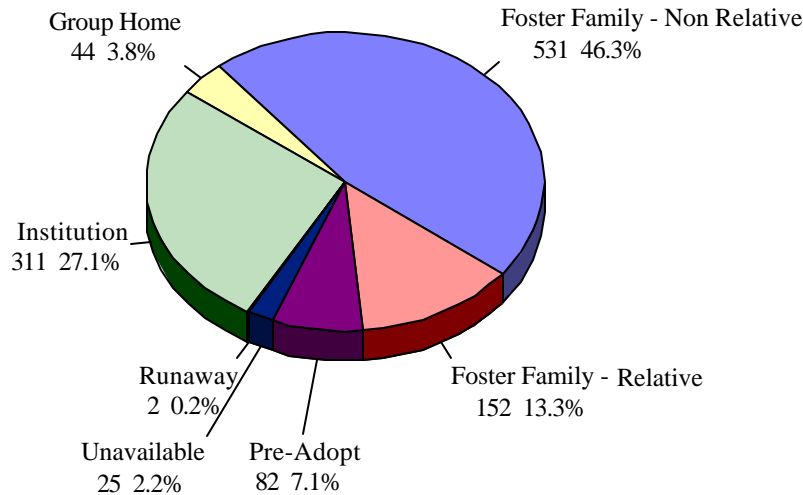
Note: Placement information was unavailable for 39 children: 7 children 0-4 years, 14 children 5-9 years, 12 children 10-14 years, and 4 children 15+ years.

Foster Care

Type of Placement

The type of foster care placement for children in care on the last day of federal fiscal year 2001.

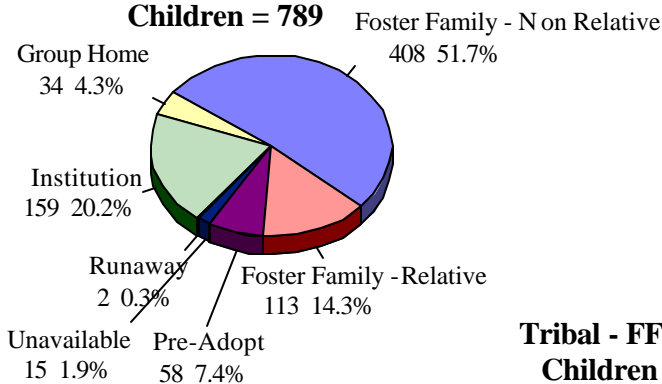
Placement Type for Children in Care on Last Day (Total Children = 1,147)



The type of foster care placement for children in care on the last day of federal fiscal year 2001 by custodian.

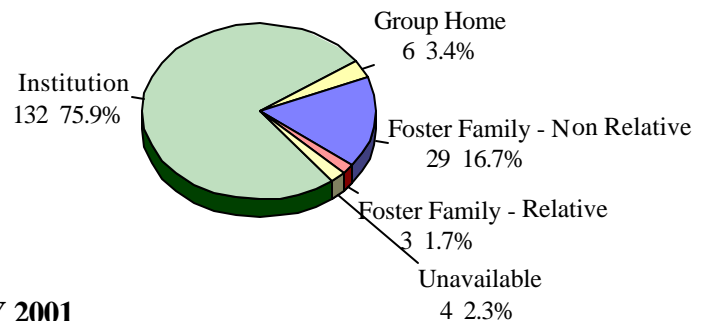
County/DHS - FFY 2001

Children = 789



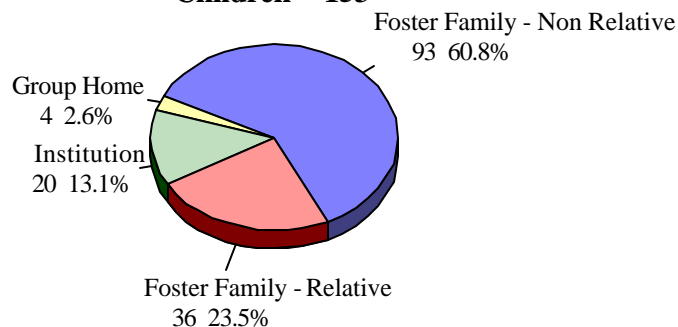
DJS - FFY 2001

Children = 174



Tribal - FFY 2001

Children = 153

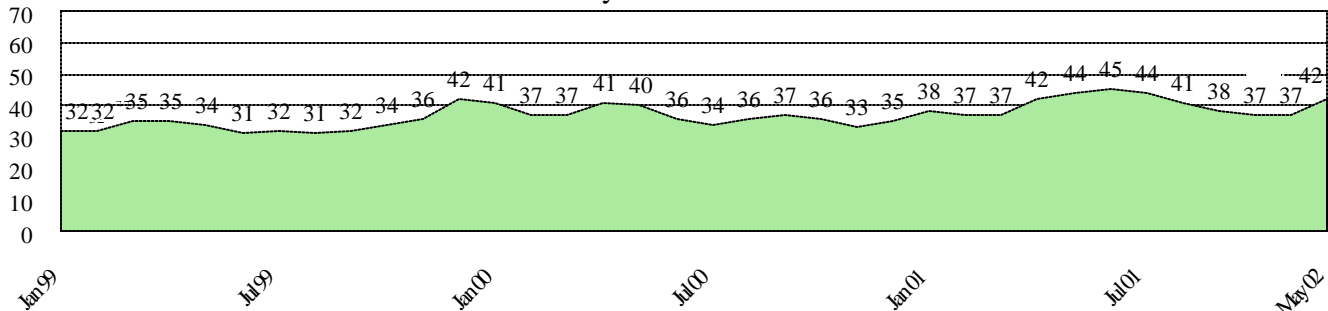


The majority of County/DHS and Tribal children are placed in foster family homes, while the majority of DJS children are placed in institutions.

Foster Care

Out-of-State Residential Foster Care for Children (Excludes PATH)

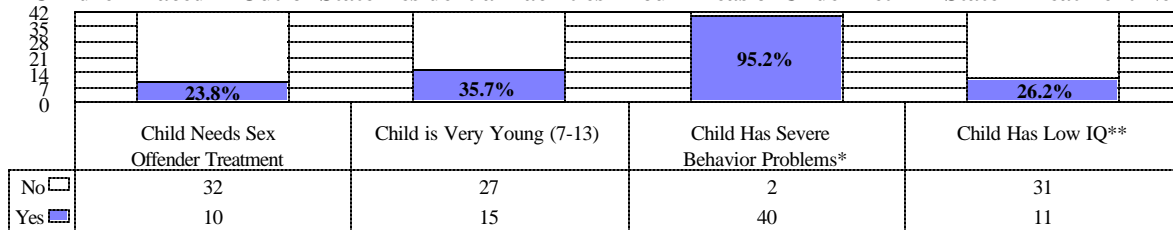
Out of State Facility Placements - Historical Trend



In some cases, a child who is in the North Dakota foster care system has unique needs that are best served out of state. The number of foster care children placed in out-of-state facilities stands at 42 as of May 2002. It appears that children primarily are placed out of state after exhausting their in-state treatment options and/or for treatment needs that are unavailable in North Dakota. In fact only two of the 42 previous children who were in care out-of-state in May hadn't been previously placed in an in-state residential facility. One child was denied by the only in-state facility licensed to serve his age group (8 years old) because the facility had no beds available and the second child was in an out-of-state adoptive placement and the facility is nearest to his adoptive family.

There are four primary areas of treatment that appear undermet by North Dakota facilities. They include 1) Sex offender treatment; 2) Treatment options for young children; 3) Treatment options for children with severe behavior problems; and 4) Treatment for children with a low IQ.

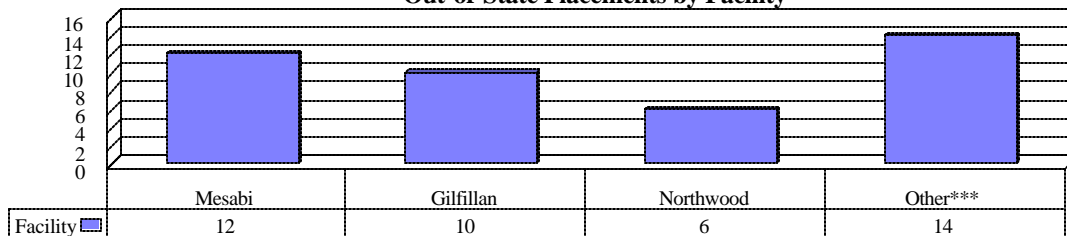
Children Placed in Out-of-State Residential Facilities - Four Areas of Undermet "In-State" Treatment Need



Note: Children may be reported under more than one category.

The undermet need for in-state treatment in the above four areas is further illustrated by the "specialties" of the out-of-state facilities utilized most often.

Out-of-State Placements by Facility



- **Mesabi** - Accepts children with an IQ of less than 70. Treats children adjudicated delinquent who have failed other residential treatment programs. Provides sex offender treatment and includes on-site school setting for children who cannot be mainstreamed into the public school system.
- **Gilfillan** - Serves young children (age 5-13) who experience a wide range of behavioral & emotional problems. Includes an on-site school for children who cannot be maintained in the public school system.
- **Northwood** - Multi-service agency that provides care for children (ages 5-18) with emotional, behavioral & learning disabilities. This facility has an on-campus school for children who cannot attend public school. Northwood accepts many hard to place children including children with severe behavioral problems and children with an IQ less than 70.

* "Severe Behavior Problems" includes: Conduct Disorder (20 Children), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (16 Children), Aggressive/Violent Behavior (24 Children)

** Children with an IQ of less than 80: 6 of the 11 children have an IQ of less than 70

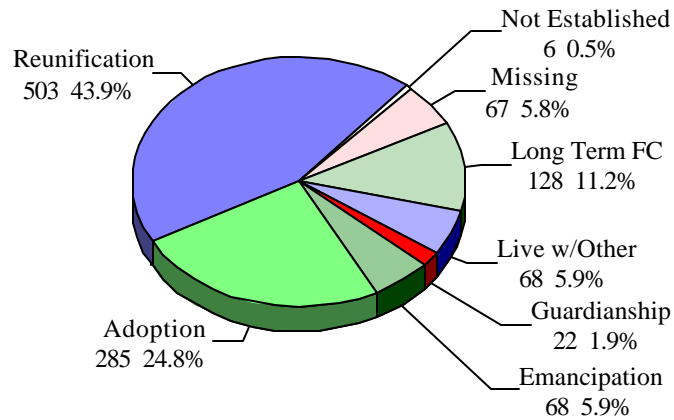
*** "Other" represents nine separate out-of-state residential facilities.

Foster Care

Permanency Goals for Children

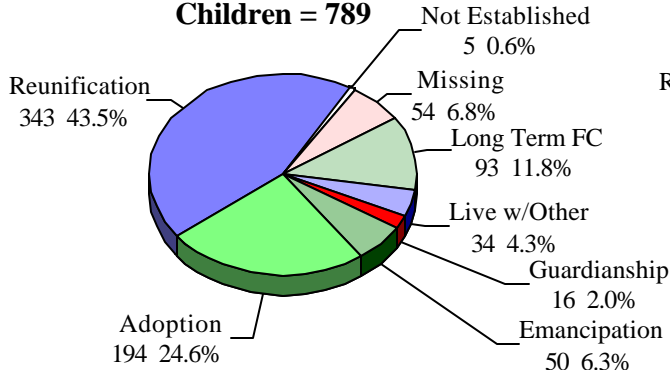
The most common goal for children in foster care is to be reunited with their parent(s)/caregiver(s).

Permanency Goals for Children in Care on the Last Day of FFY 2001 (Total Children = 1,147)

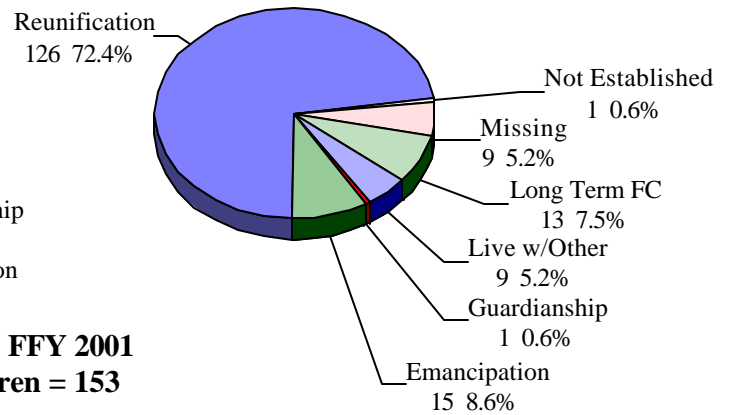


Permanency goals for children in care on the last day of federal fiscal year 2001 by custodian.

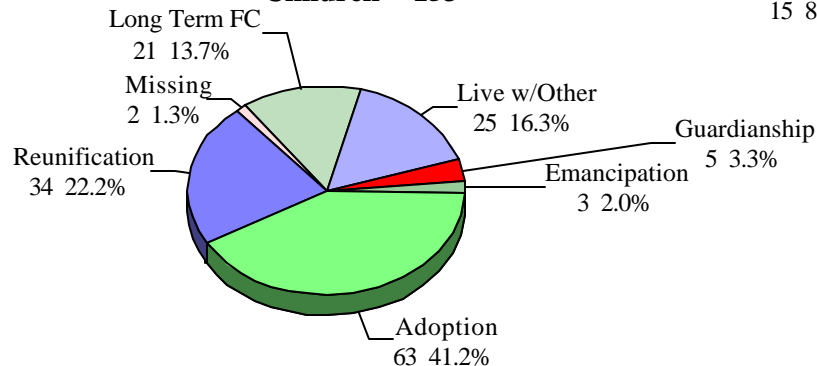
County/DHS - FFY 2001 **Children = 789**



DJS - FFY 2001 **Children = 174**



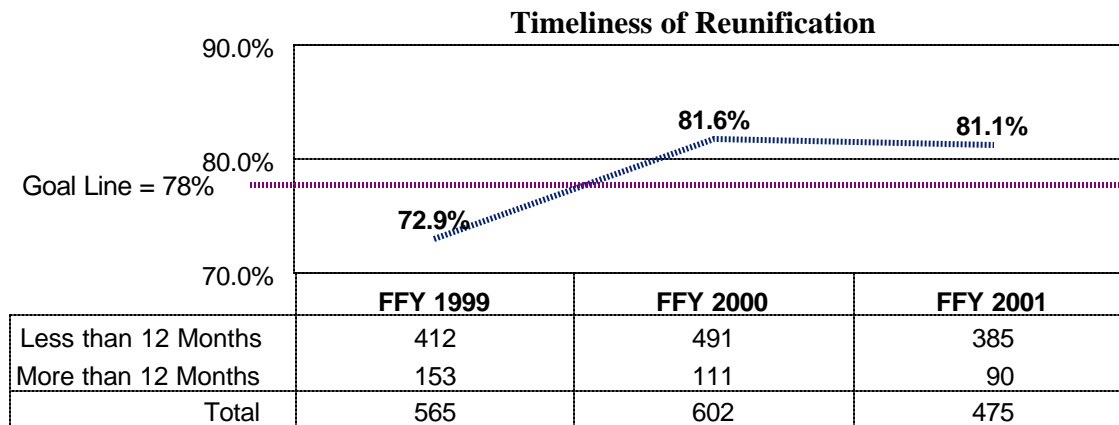
Tribal - FFY 2001 **Children = 153**



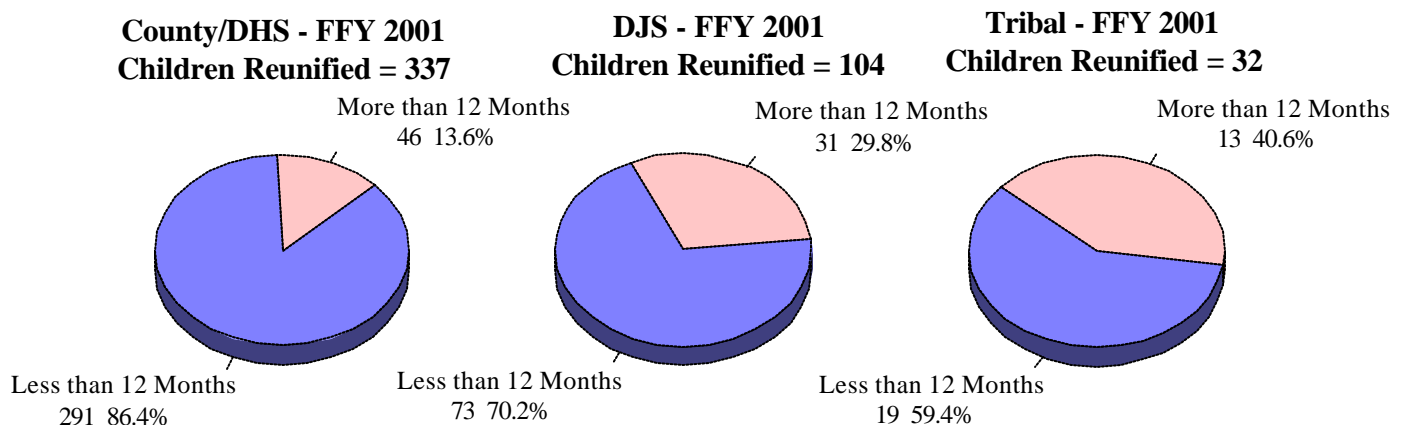
Foster Care

Timeliness of Reunification

North Dakota compares favorably to the national standard on the timeframes to reunify children with their parents or caretakers. Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 81.1% (compared to the national standard of 78%) of the children were reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home.



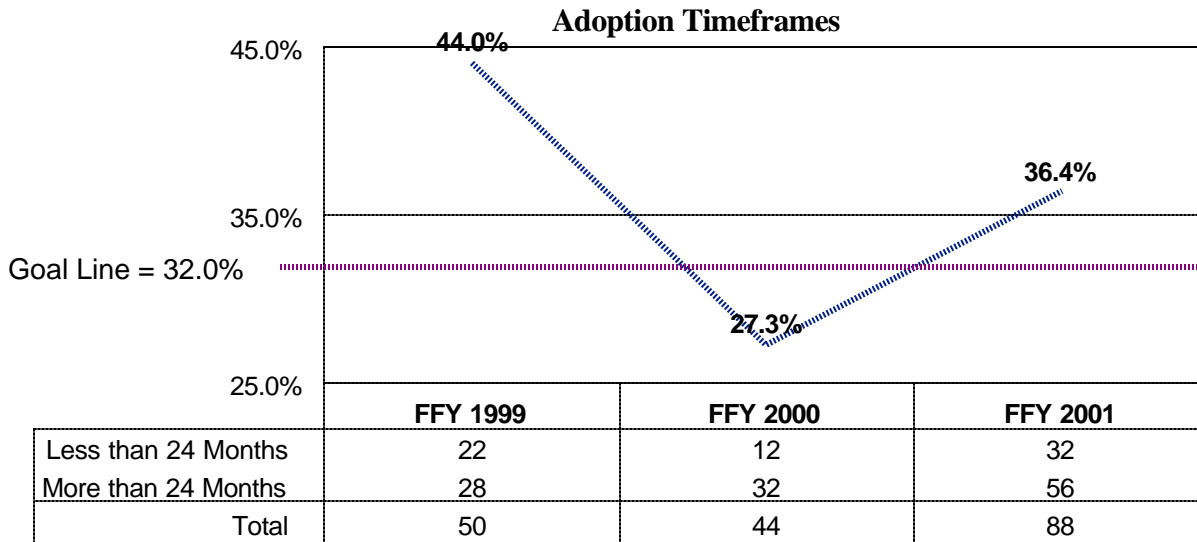
Timeliness of reunification by custodian.



Foster Care

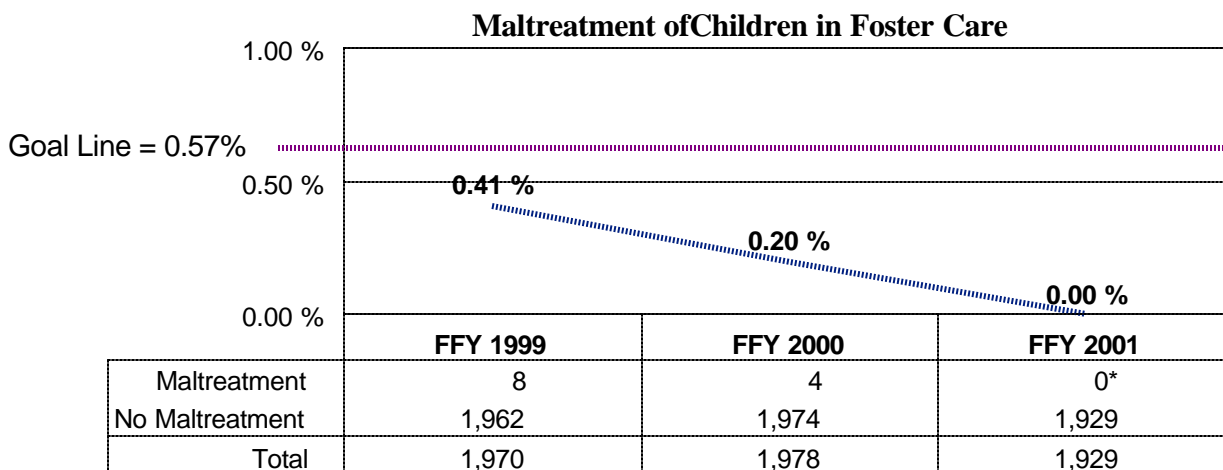
Adoption Timeframes/Victims of Maltreatment

Of all children who exited foster care to a finalized adoption in federal fiscal year 2001, 36.4% (compared to the national standard of 32.0%) of the children exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home.



Maltreatment in Foster Care

As seen in the chart below, North Dakota has a lower rate of maltreatment in foster care than the national standard. Maltreatment of children in foster care includes maltreatment by 1) a foster parent in a child abuse and neglect assessment that results in a "services required" decision; or 2) facility staff in an "identified" case.

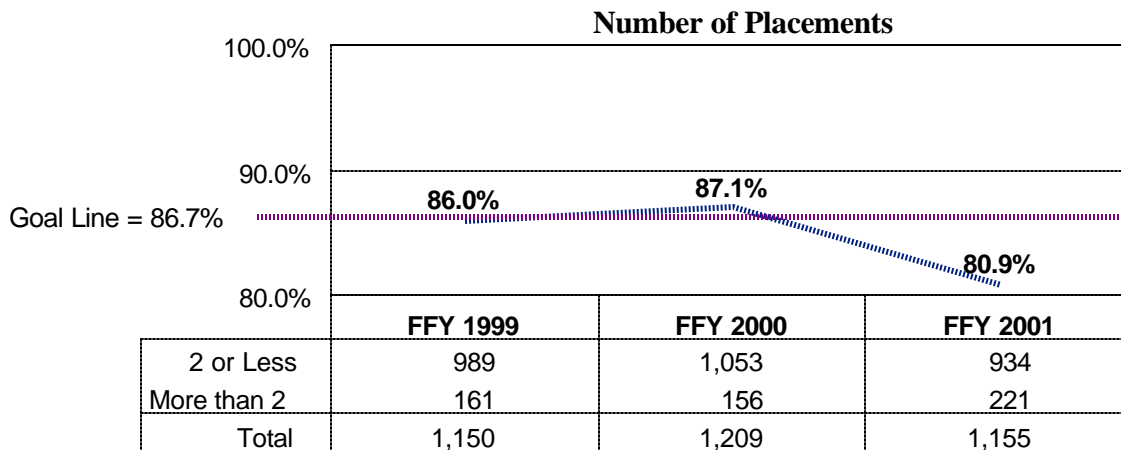


*preliminary- excludes institutional cases

Foster Care

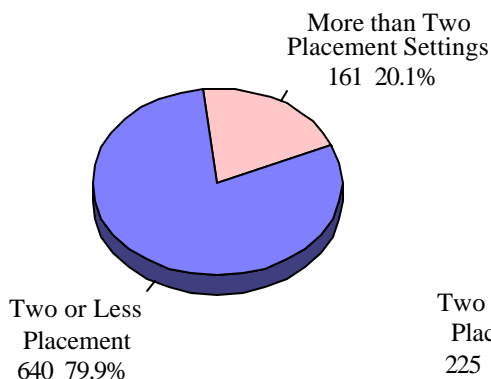
Number of Placements

North Dakota strives to create a stable environment for children who need foster care. Of all children who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal, 80.9% (compared to the 86.7% national standard) had two or fewer placement settings. As seen in the chart, North Dakota exceeded the national standard in federal fiscal year 2000. The drop-off in federal fiscal year 2001 may be due to a reporting irregularity. We were still examining this possibility when this bulletin went to press.

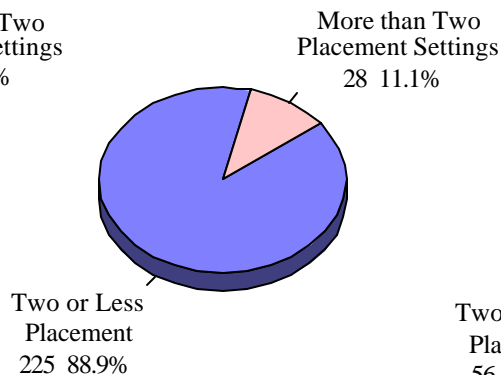


Number of placements for children who have been in care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal.

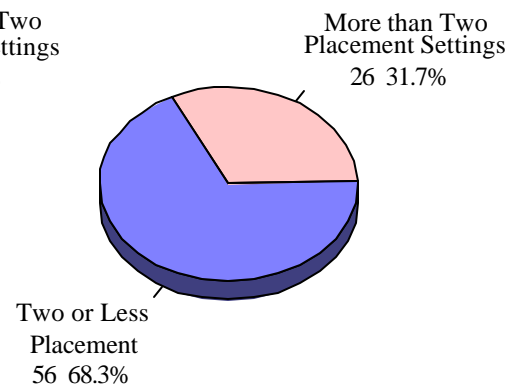
County/DHS - FFY 2001
Children = 801



DJS - FFY 2001
Children = 253



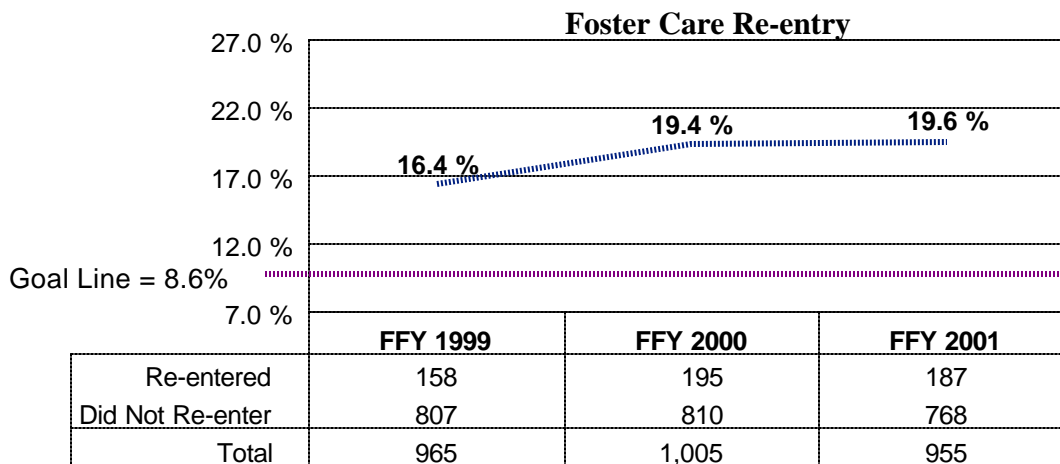
Tribal - FFY 2001
Children = 82



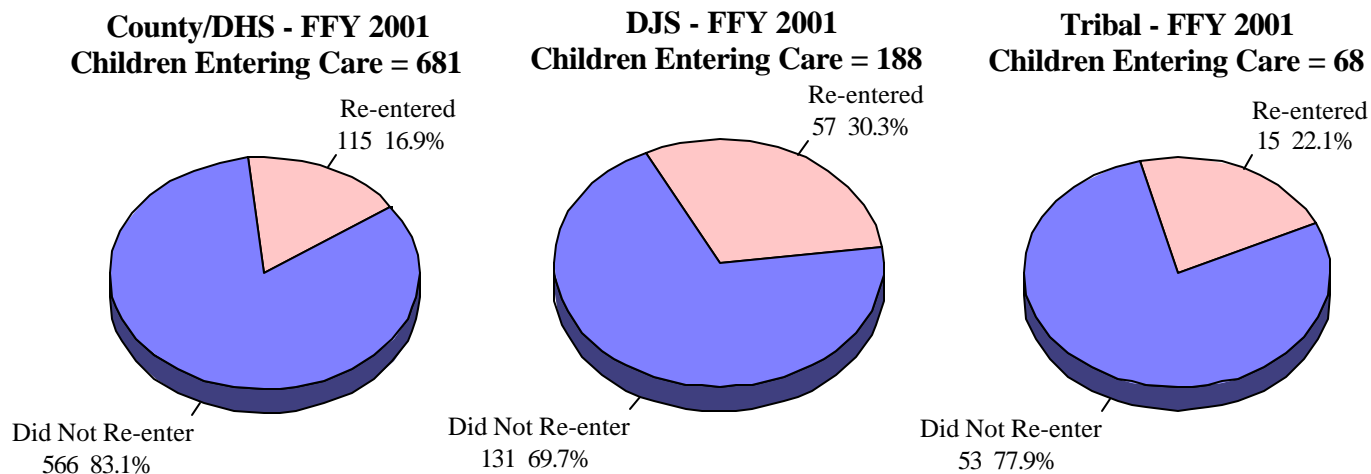
Foster Care

Foster Care Re-entry

One of the areas North Dakota is working to improve is re-entry rates. Of all children who entered foster care during the year, 19.6% of those children re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode. Factors related to higher re-entry are explored on the next page.



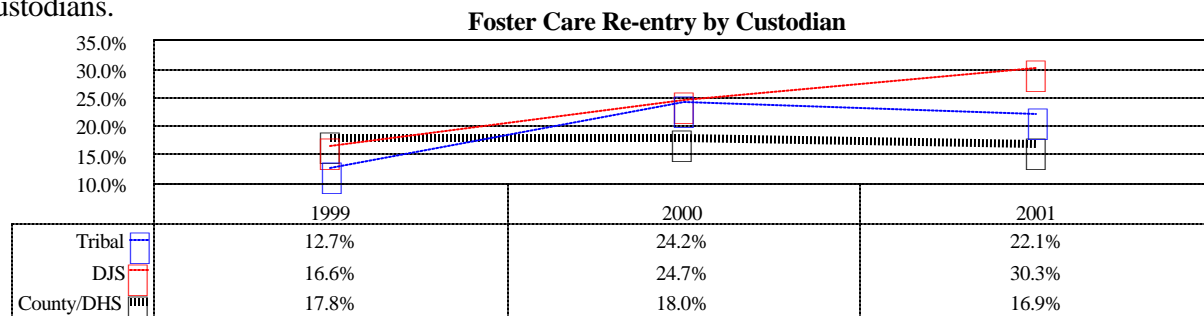
Foster care re-entry by custodian.



Foster Care

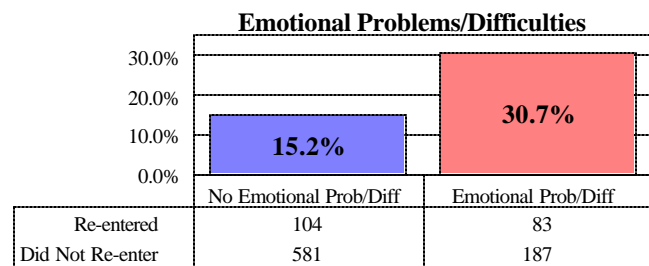
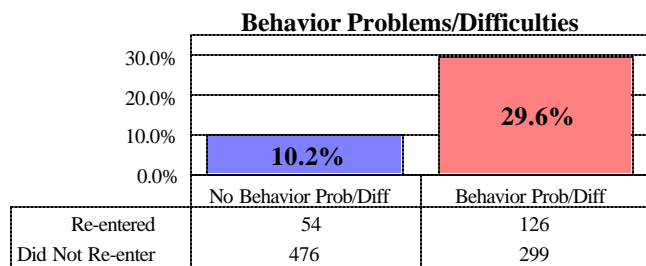
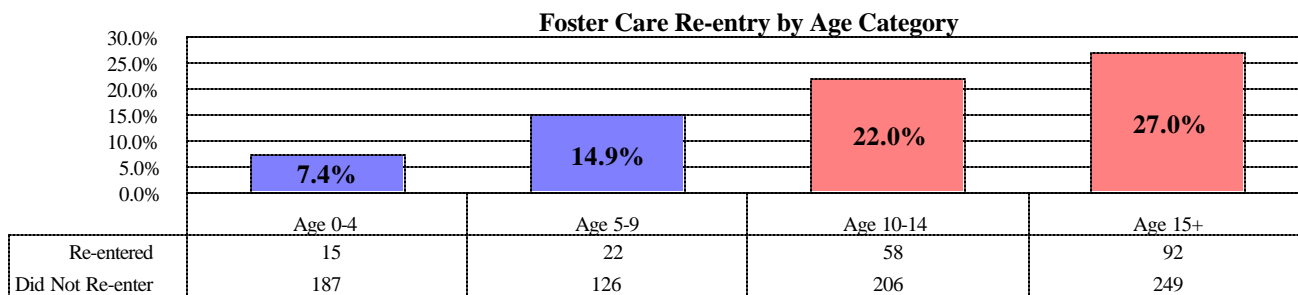
Re-entry Analysis

Preliminary analysis suggests the North Dakota Foster Care Re-entry rate is related to several factors. For example, North Dakota includes data for children under the custody of the County and Department (DHS), the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJS) and the Tribes, and the re-entry trend is different across custodians.

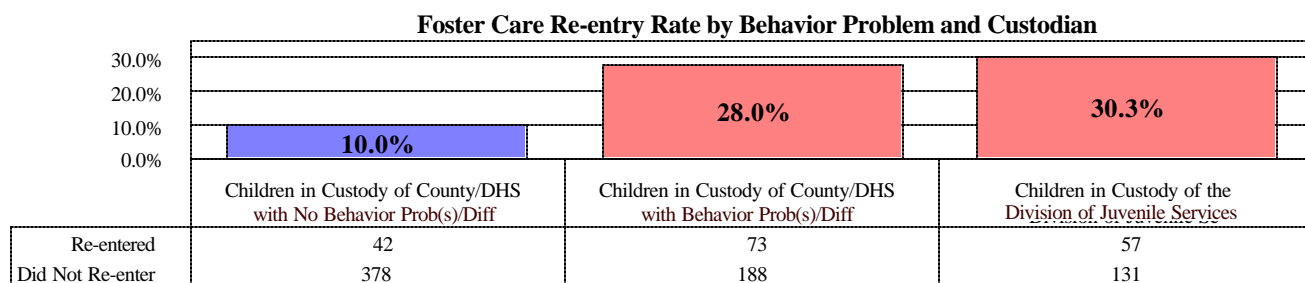


Note: Children in the custody DJS and Tribal represent 188 (19.7%) and 68 (7.1%) respectively, of the total number of children used in the calculation of the re-entry rate (955 children) in FY2001.

In North Dakota, the highest rates of re-entry appear to occur among older children and children with behavioral and emotional problems/difficulties.

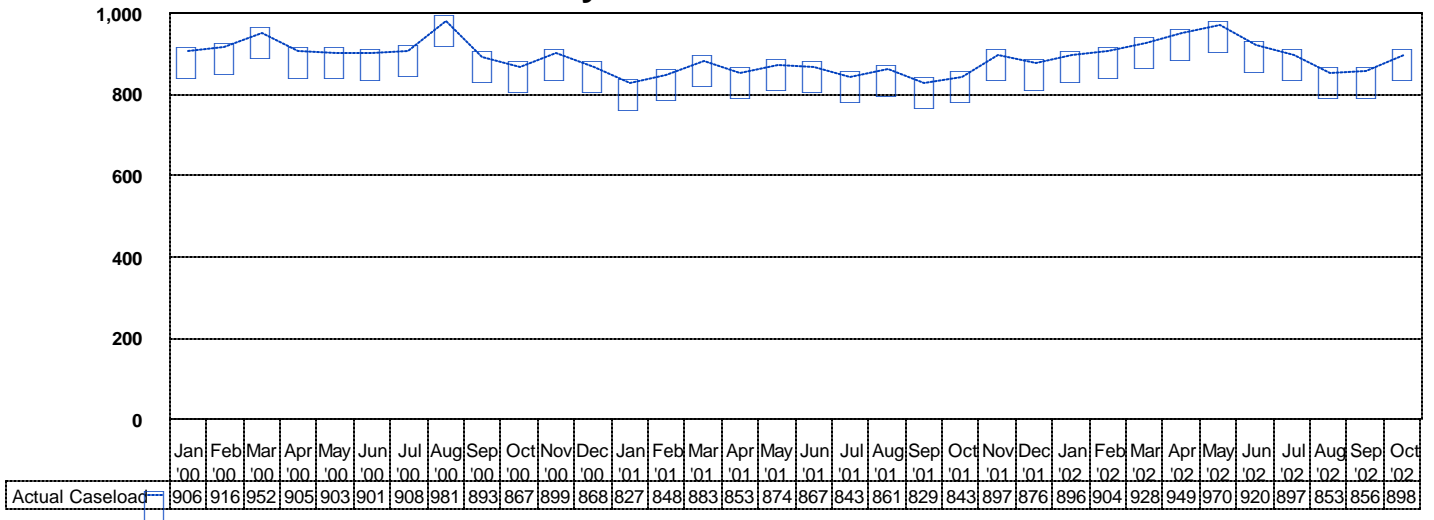


The higher rate of re-entry associated with children who have behavioral or emotional problems/difficulties appears to be independent of custodian.

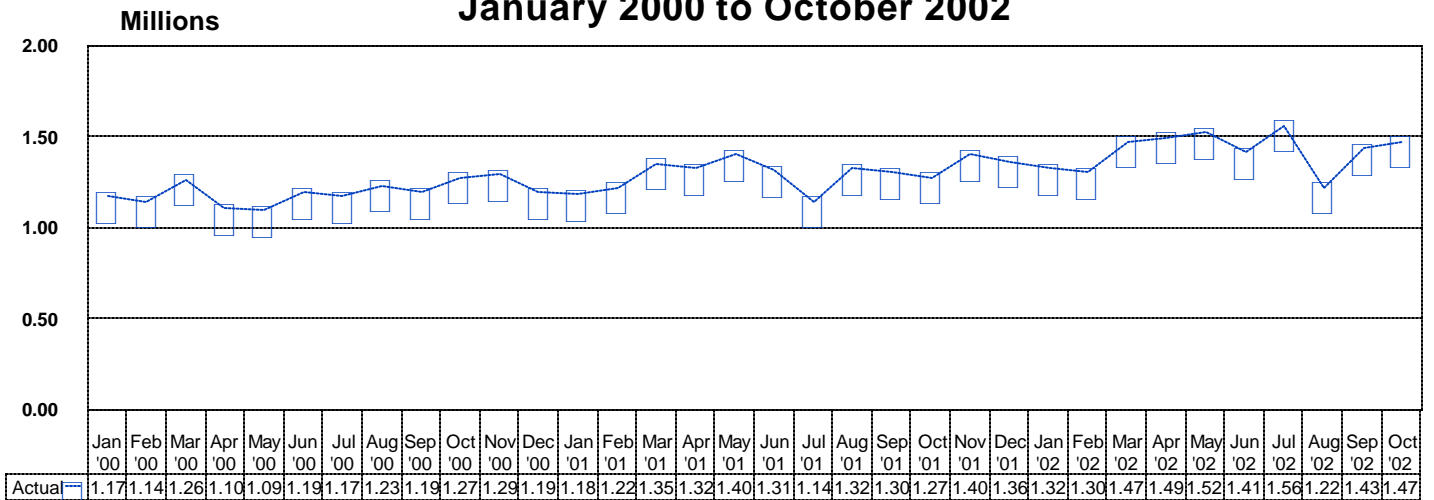


Foster Care Expenditures

Foster Care Maintenance Total Unduplicated Children January 2000 to October 2002



Foster Care Maintenance Total Expenditures January 2000 to October 2002



Adoption

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2002

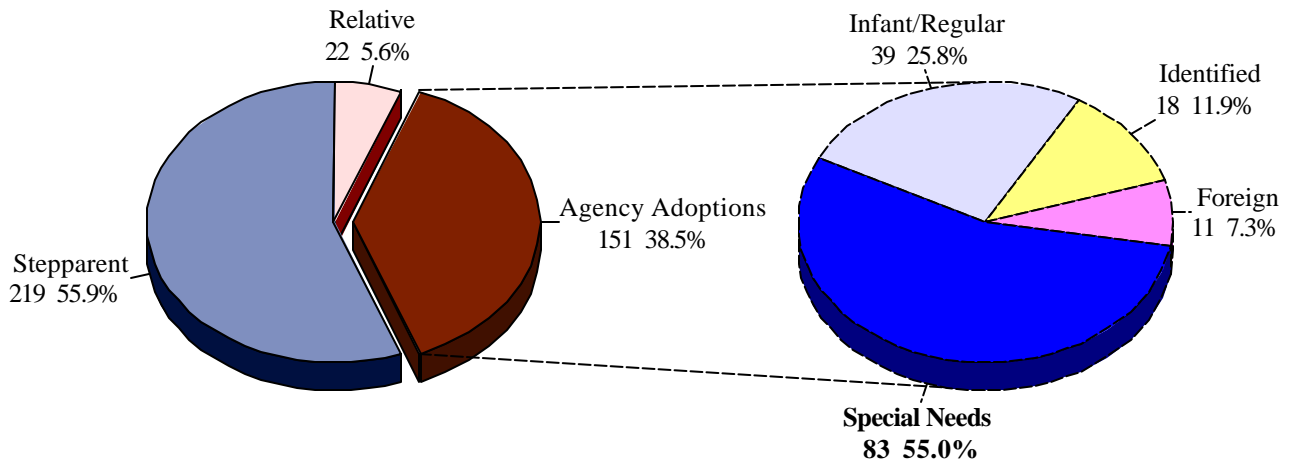
October 1,2001 - September 30, 2002

All Adoptions

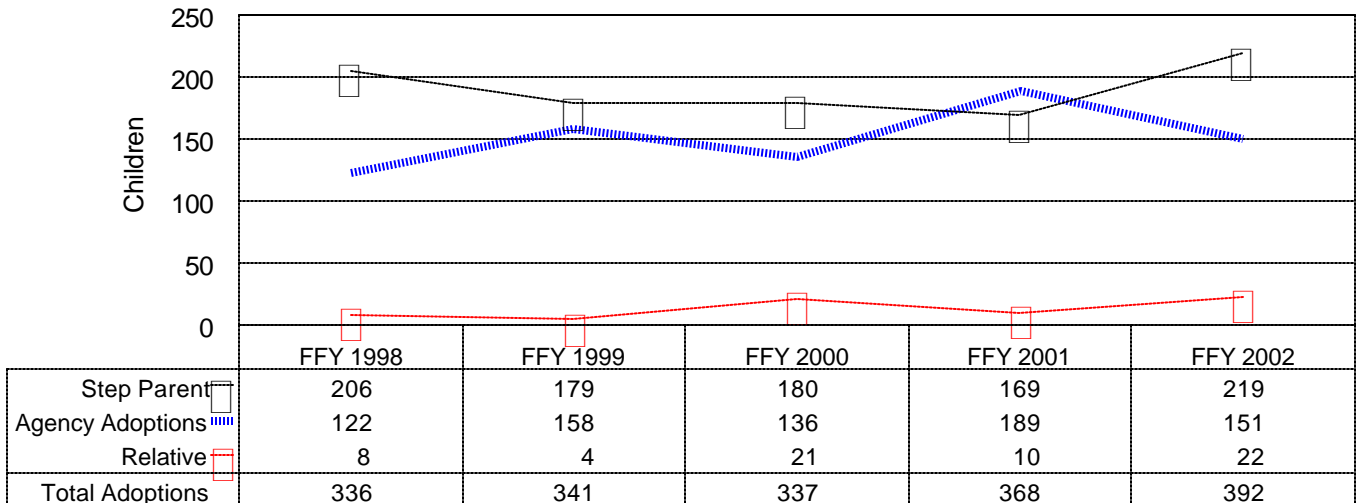
All Adoptions by Type of Adoption

During federal fiscal year 2002 (October 1, 2001 - September 30, 2002), 392 children were adopted in North Dakota. Of the 392 children adopted, 219 (55.9%) were stepparent adoptions, 22 (5.6%) were relative adoptions, and 151 (38.5%) were agency adoptions. Agency adoptions do not include stepparent adoptions and some relative adoptions because the child's placement into the adoptive home did not involve assistance from an adoption agency. Agency adoptions involve a recognized licensed child placement agency placing children with prospective adoptive parents or assisting in an identified adoption placement.

**Number of Children by Type of Adoption
Federal Fiscal Year 2002**



**Number of Children by Type of Adoption
FFY 1998 to FFY 2002**

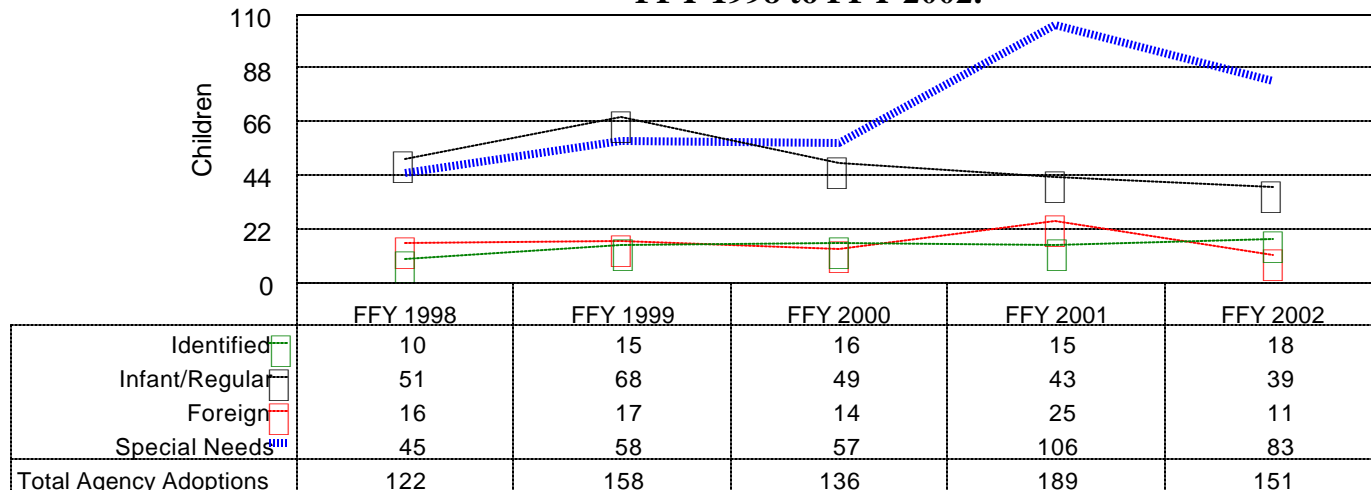


Agency Adoptions

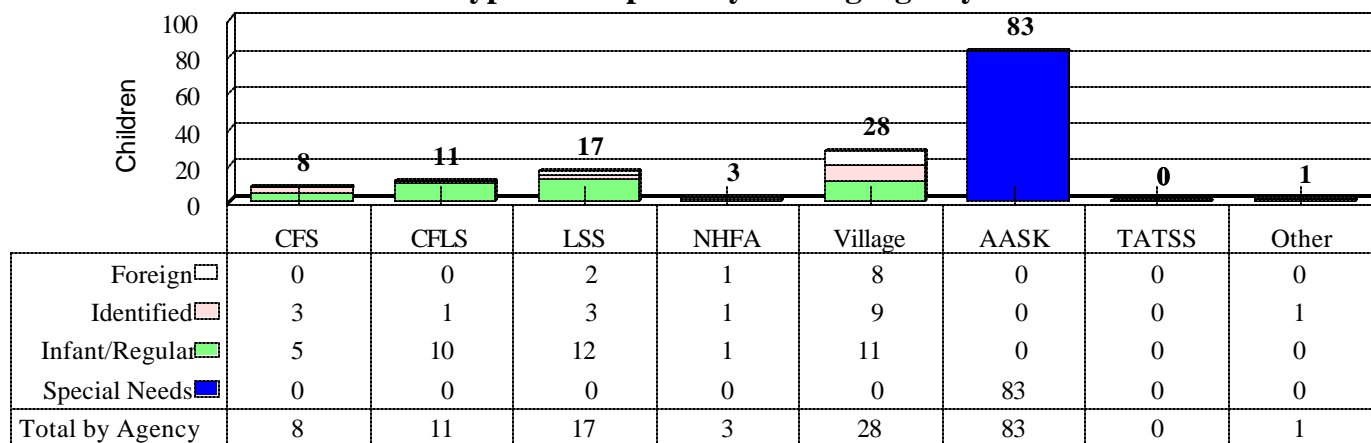
Agency Adoptions by Type of Adoption

In federal fiscal year 2002, 151 of the 392 children adopted were placed by agencies. Of the 151 agency adoptions, in federal fiscal year 2002, 83 were special needs adoptions. Special needs adoptions typically involve foster care children, and will be the focus of the remainder of the adoption information contained in this bulletin. As seen in the chart below, the number of special needs adoption has increased dramatically during the last two years. The number of children adopted by type of adoption:

**Agency Adoptions by Type of Adoption
FFY 1998 to FFY 2002.**



Type of Adoption by Placing Agency FFY 2002

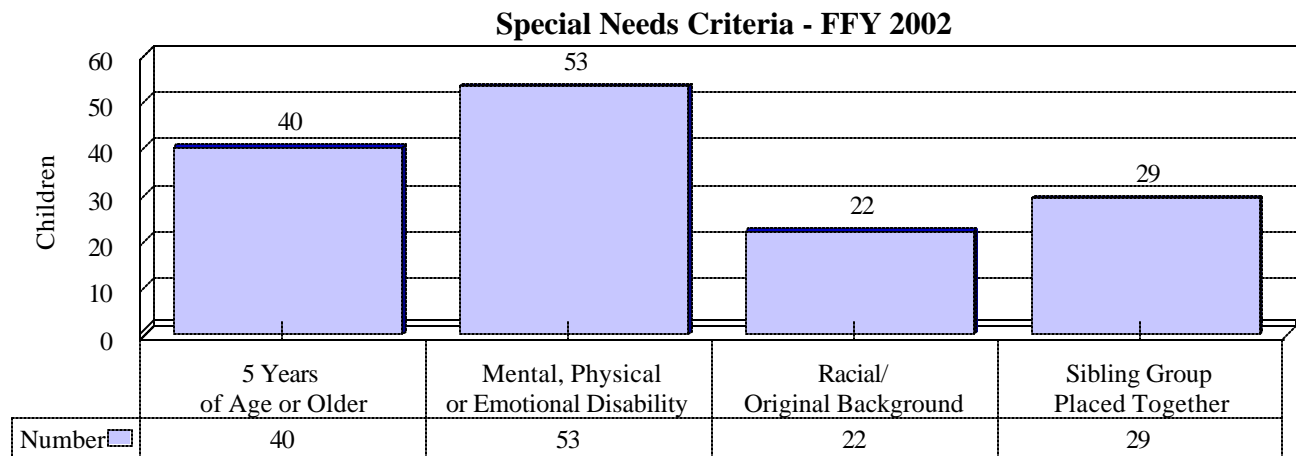


CFS = Catholic Family Services CFLS = Christian Family Life Services LSS = Lutheran Social Services
 NHFA = New Horizons Foreign Adoption Village = The Village Family Service Center AASK = Adults Adopting Special Kids
 TATSS = Three Affiliated Tribes Social Services

Special Needs Adoptions

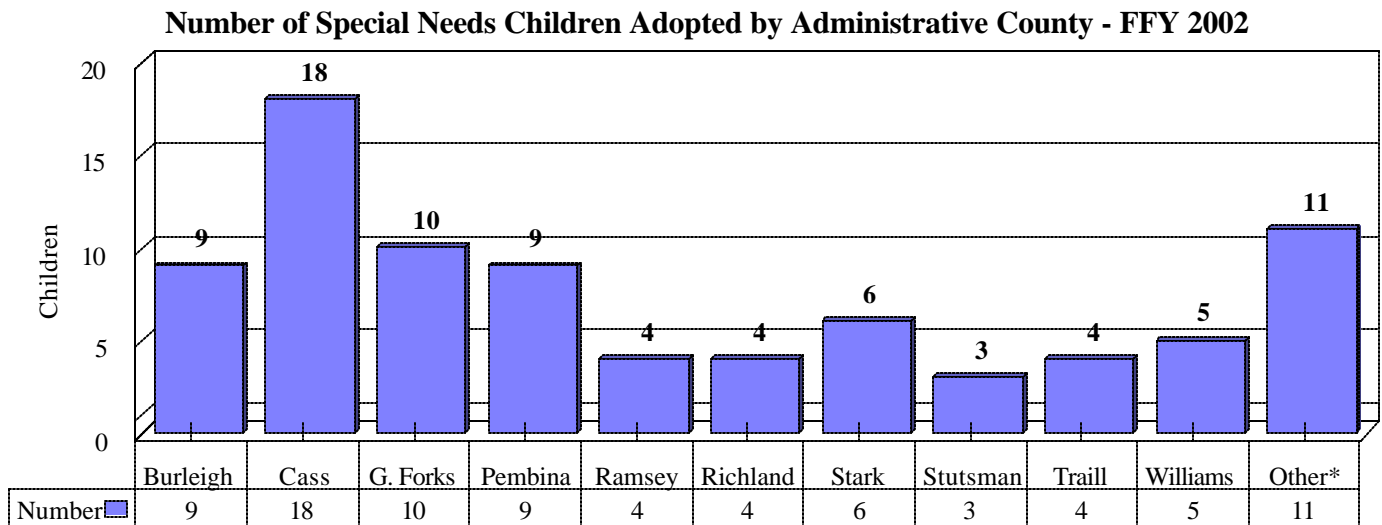
Special Needs Conditions

A total of 83 special needs adoptions occurred in federal fiscal year 2002. Of the 83 children, 53 (63.9%) had a mental, physical, or emotional disability, 40 (48.2%) were 5 years of age or older, 29 (34.9%) were members of a sibling group to be placed together, and 22 (26.5%) were of non-Caucasian background.



Note: Children may have more than one designation.

Special Needs Adoptions by Administrative County



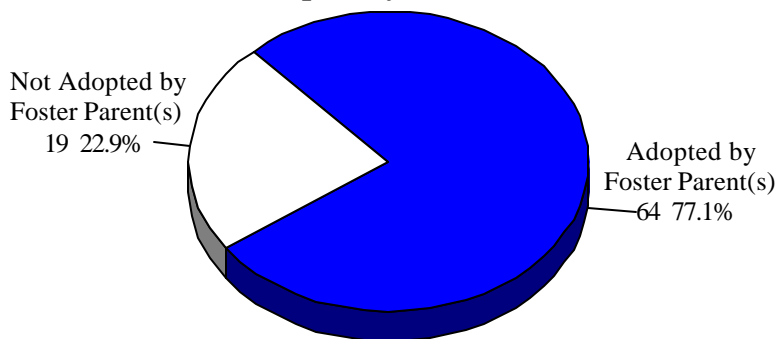
*Note: "Other" includes counties with two or fewer children adopted during federal fiscal year 2002. It includes: Barnes =1, Bottineau =1, Cavalier =1, Eddy =2, Mercer =1, Morton =1, Pierce =1, Ward =2, Wells =1.

Special Needs Adoptions

Adoptions by Foster Parents

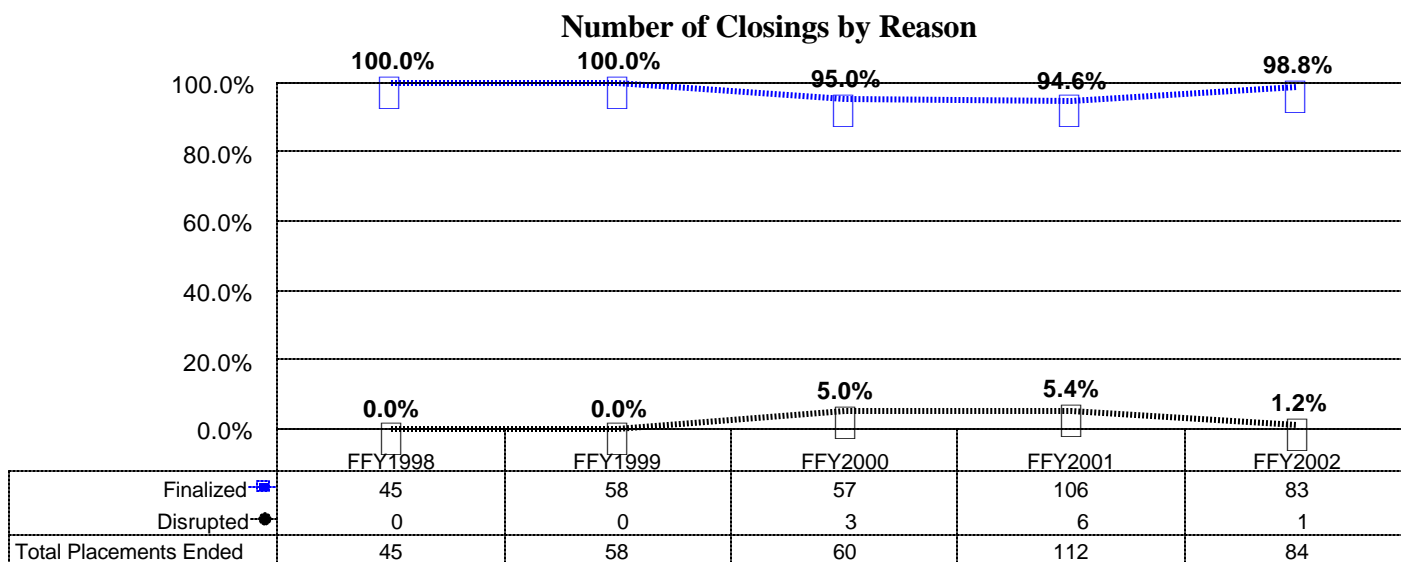
A total of 83 special needs adoptions occurred in federal fiscal year 2002. Of the 83 children, 64 (77.1%) were adopted by a foster parent, and 19 (22.9%) were not adopted by a foster parent.

Special Needs Children Adopted by Foster Parent(s) - FFY 2002



Disruptions

Of all 84 special needs children who had adoptive placements end in federal fiscal year 2002, 83 (98.8%) placements ended in a finalized adoption and one (1.2%) placement ended due to a disruption. A disruption occurs when a child placed for adoption is removed from the home prior to adoption finalization.

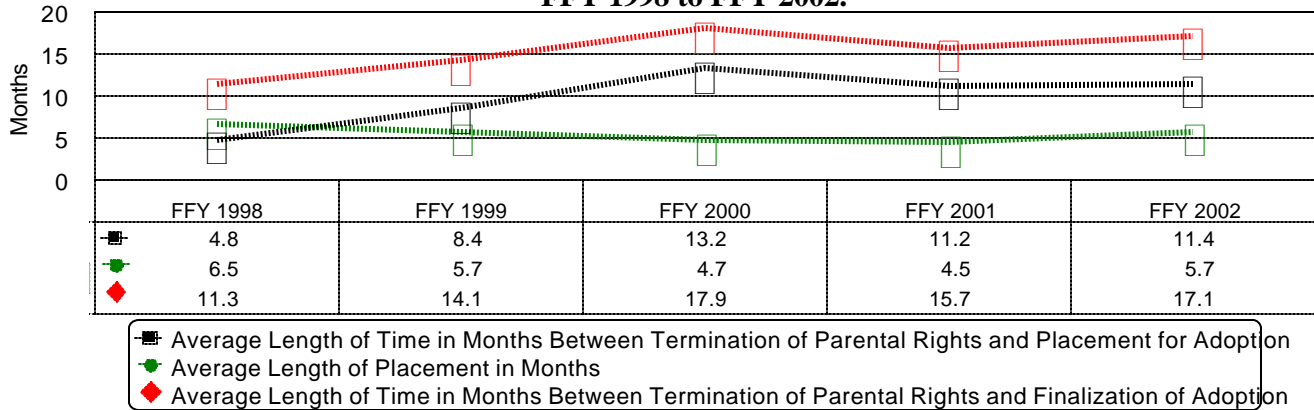


Special Needs Adoptions

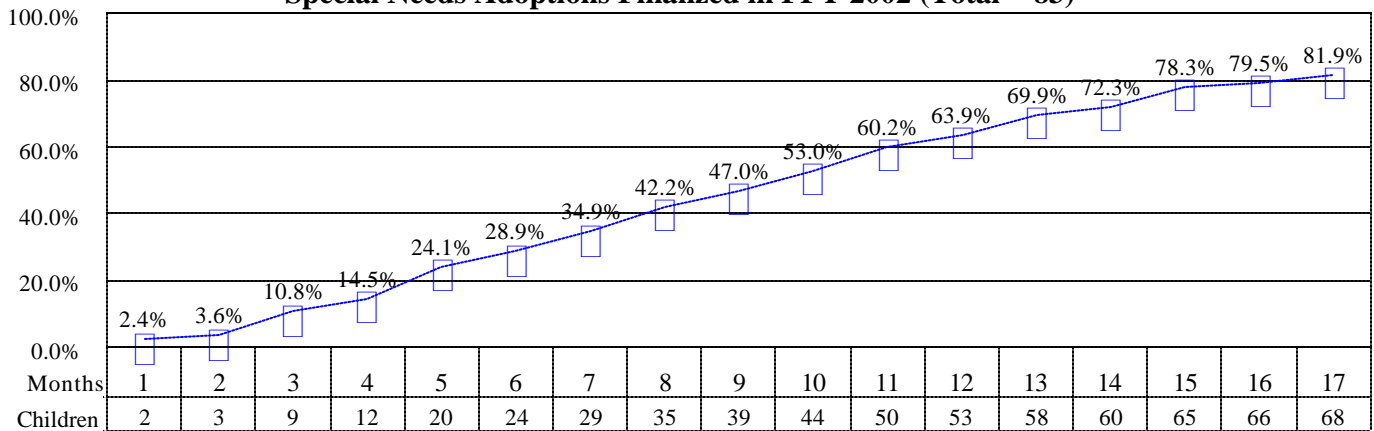
Special Needs Adoption Timeframes

The average length of time between termination of parental rights and adoption finalization for special needs adoptions was 17.1 months in federal fiscal year 2002. This included an average length of time of 11.4 months between termination of parental rights and adoptive placement and an average of 5.7 months between adoptive placement and finalization of the adoption.

**Special Needs Average Length of Time in Months for Adoptions
FFY 1998 to FFY 2002.**

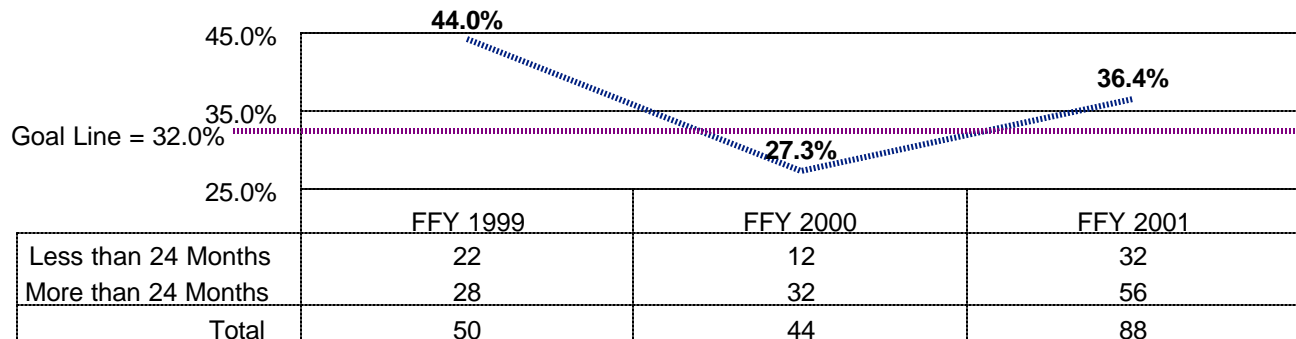


**Percent of Children Placed for Adoption Within the Specified
Time Frame From Time of Termination of Parental Rights
Special Needs Adoptions Finalized in FFY 2002 (Total = 83)**



North Dakota compares favorably to the national measure of adoption timeframes. The national measure:

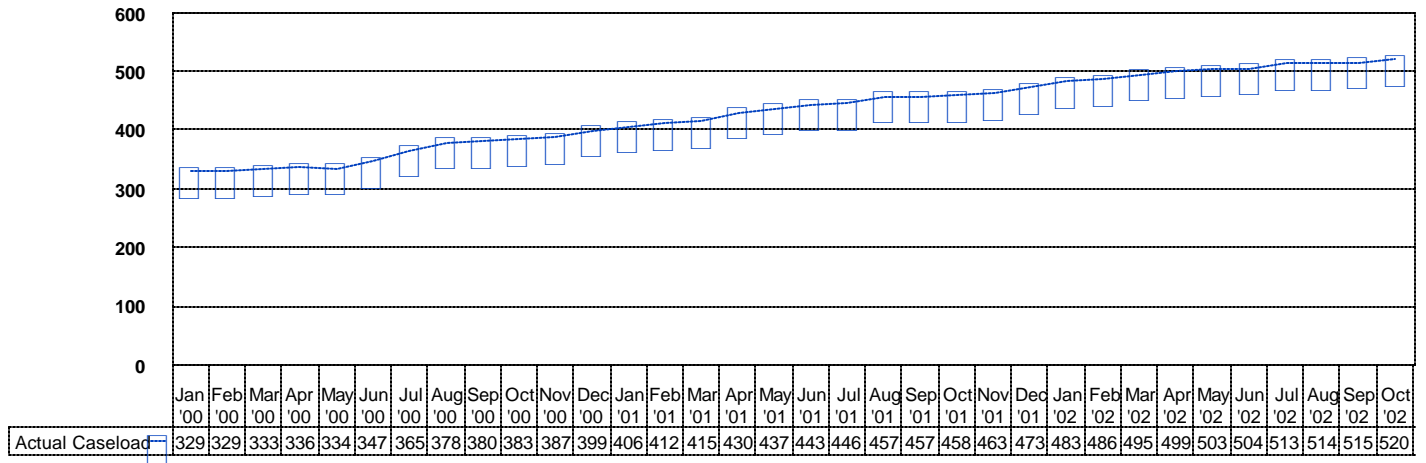
Of all children who exited foster care to a finalized adoption, 32.0% or more children exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home.



Footnote: This data is reported using the federal AFCARS data. Therefore, at the time this was published, the data was available through federal fiscal year 2001.

Adoption Expenditures

Subsidized Adoption Total Unduplicated Children January 2000 to October 2002



Subsidized Adoption Total Expenditures January 2000 to October 2002

